

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EA-06 SCA-01 DPW-01 DHA-02 PRS-01

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R 031138Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1598

INFO AMCONGEN HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

JCRC BARBERS PT HA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 21856

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CASC VS VN

SUBJECT: AMERICAN IN VIET-NAM

REF: BANGKOK 21551

1. EMBOFF MET AUGUST 2 WITH DARRYL HAN, UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE IN HANOI, WHO ACCOMPANIED UNHCR-SPONSORED FLIGHT OF AMERICANS FROM SAIGON TO BANGKOK PREVIOUS DAY (REFTEL). DISCUSSION FOCUSSED ON THAT FLIGHT AND QUESTION OF REMAINING AMERICANS.

2. HAN RECOUNTED THAT HE WAS FIRST APPROACHED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF ARRANGING FLIGHT ON JULY 12 IN HANOI. RATIONALE WHICH SRV OFFICIALS GAVE TO IT WAS THAT THEY WANTED TO MAKE SPECIAL HUMANITARIAN GESTURE IN RESPONSE TO APPEALS FROM PROMINENT AMERICANS. HE SPECULATED THAT FLIGHT MAY HAVE OCCURRED FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS: EXPECTATION OF INFLUENCING IN SOME VAGUE WAY U.S. ELECTIONS, WISH TO MAKE A MOVE IN OUR DIRECTION AT TIME THAT QUESTION OF UN MEMBERSHIP IS IMMINENT, AND DESIRE TO RID SAIGON OF FOREIGNERS GENERALLY AND OF OFTEN
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TROUBLESOME AMERICANS SPECIFICALLY.

3. HAN SAID HE THOUGH SAIGON OFFICIALS WERE QUITE COOPERATIVE IN ASSISTING WITH FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS. IT WAS UNCERTAIN UNTIL LAST MINUTE THAT THEY WOULD SUCCEED IN BRINGING MCDONALD UP FROM AN GIANG IN TIME. EMBOFF NOTED THAT NUMBER OF AMERICANS AND DEPENDENTS HAD TO STRIP COMPLETELY AND SUBMIT TO BODY SEARCHES BEFORE LEAVING TAN SON NHUT, SOMETHING THEY -- PARTICULARLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN -- FOUND TO BE FAR FROM FRIENDLY ATTITUDE.

4. TOWARD END OF LAST WEEK, "DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS" IN SAIGON (REMANANT OF FORMER PRG FOREIGN MINISTRY WHICH REMAINS IN PLACE TO LOOK AFTER PROBLEMS OF AND WITH FOREIGNERS) TOLD HAN THAT THE VIETNAMESE DO NOT WISH TO RETAIN AMERICANS OR DEPENDENTS OF AMERICANS WHO DO NOT WISH TO REMAIN IN THIER COUNTRY. HAN SUGGESTED THAT THIS STATEMENT OPENS THE DOOR SLIGHTLY TO FUTURE FAMILY REUNIFICATION (E.G., OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE WIVES REMAINING IN VIET-NAM OF AMCITS) BUT THIS WOULD REQUIRE SOME POLITICAL INITIATIVE ON OUR PART. (EMBOFF NOTED THAT WE CONTINUE TO APPROVE HUMANITARIAN AID TO VIET-NAM).

5. THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR CLAIMED TO HAN THAT ONLY AMCITS STILL IN THE SOUTH ARE REED AND HUGHES (REMAINING SLIGHTLY LONGER AT THEIR OWN REQUEST) AND GAY (OFFICIALLY DESCRIBED AS NOT ABLE TO BE LOCATED). HE SAID THAT THEY AND ANY OTHERS WHO TURN UP WILL BE ABLE TO DEPART ON FRENCH FLIGHTS, IF THEY WISH.

6. HAN EXPECTS TO RETURN TO SAIGON SHORTLY TO TRY TO ARRANGE FOR FLIGHT OF FILIPINOS LATER IN THE WEEK AND HAS PROMISED TO INQUIRE THERE (AND IN HANOI) AS TO WHEREABOUTS OF GAY AND GOUGELMANN, AS WELL AS TO THE POSSIBILITY OF DEPARTURE OF OTHER MAERICAN PASSPORT HOLDERS OR DEPENDENTS OF WHOM WE ARE AWARE. EMBOFF INFORMED HAN OF SPECULATION THAT BOTH GAY AND GOUGELMANN MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN NORTH.
WHITEHOUSE

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